

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 05568 101013Z

44

ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 DPW-01 FBIE-00
INSE-00 VO-03 /091 W

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R 100919Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6723

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 5568

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJ: PROPOSED PROCEDURES FOR CONDITIONAL ENTRY PROCESSING
FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEE BOAT CASES

REF: STATE 299088

1. ALLOTMENT BY USG OF 100 CONDITIONAL ENTRY NUMBERS AS
PART OF A BROAD INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM
WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE HELPFUL IN REASSURING SOME SEA GOVERNMENTS
THAT BOAT CASE REFUGEES WILL ULTIMATELY BE RESETTLED. AS PARA
8 REFTEL RECOGNIZES GOS WOULD STILL BE VERY RELUCTANT TO
ALLOW REFUGEES TO LAND IN ABSENCE OF IRON-CLAD GUARANTEES
DIRECTED AT SPECIFIC REFUGEES EXTENDED BY A PARTICULAR COUNTRY.
DEPARTMENT IS AWARE THAT GOS HAS NOT BEEN WILLING TO ACCEPT
A UNHCR GUARANTEE, AND IT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO BUDGE
SINGAPORE ON THIS POINT. NEVERTHELESS, ONCE CE PROGRAM IS IN
OPERATION (AND ACTUALLY BEGINS PROVIDING 120 NUMBERS MONTHLY)
IT WILL REPRESENT A VERY USEFUL TALKING POINT FROM WHICH WE
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PAGE 02 SINGAP 05568 101013Z

MIGHT POSSIBLY BE ABLE TO ENGINEER GREATER GOS FLEXIBILITY.

2. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE IN SINGAPORE, DETAILED PROCEDURES SET FORTH REFTEL CALLING FOR PRE-SCREENING BY POST AND FINAL PROCESSING BY CONGEN HONG KONG SEEM CUMBERSOME AND TIME CONSUMING. OUR UNDERSTANDING OF REFTEL IS THAT IF UNHCR IS UNABLE TO ESTABLISH A REGIONAL PROCESSING CENTER, U.S. ELIGIBLE BOAT CASE REFUGEES WOULD BE SENT THROUGH HONG KONG WITH CONGEN AND INS CONTROLLING ISSUANCE OF CE NUMBERS. HOWEVER, PARA 5G REFTEL MAKES IT CLEAR THAT REFUGEES CANNOT MOVE TO HONG KONG UNTIL FALCON CLEARANCE OBTAINED, INTERVIEW AND MEDICAL COMPLETED, CE AND NON-PREFERENCE NUMBERS ARE AVAILABLE AND INS AND CONGEN HAVE REVIEWED DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON EACH REFUGEE SUBMITTED BY THE POST AND APPROVED THEIR ELIGIBILITY. FURTHERMORE, PARA 5H STATES ICEM WILL NOT BE ABLE TO MOVE REFUGEES TO HONG KONG UNTIL IT HAS RECEIVED ASSURANCES FROM VOLUNTEER AGENCIES THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE US TO RECEIVE THE REFUGEES. THEREFORE, REFUGEES WOULD REMAIN IN SINGAPORE DURING PRE-SCREENING PERIOD FOR AS LONG A TIME, AND PERHAPS EVEN LONGER, THAN AT PRESENT WITH NO ASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD BE FOUND ELIGIBLE, OR THAT NP NUMBERS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS WHEN CE WAS APPROVED FOR PRINCIPAL. ASIDE FROM THE ULTIMATE AVAILABILITY OF MORE NUMBERS, THIS PROCEDURE WOULD NOT IMPROVE OUR CHANCES OF GAINING GOS COOPERATION.

3. WITH SOLE EXCEPTION OF INTERVIEWS TO BE CONDUCTED BY INS HONG KONG AT POSTS IN REGION (PARA 5E REFTEL) WHICH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY ASSIST OUR HARD-PRESSED CONSULAR OFFICERS IN REGION, WE CANNOT SEE WHAT WE ARE GAINING BY TRANSFERRING TO HONG KONG THE PROCEDURES WHICH NOW TAKE PLACE IN WASHINGTON. THE ONE HELPFUL FEATURE (VISITS BY INS OFFICERS IN HONG KONG TO INDIVIDUAL POSTS TO INTERVIEW REFUGEES) COULD BE PERFORMED WITHOUT TRANSFERRING THE REST OF THE PROCESS. FURTHERMORE, THE NECESSITY OF FORWARDING TO HONG KONG BY POUCH OR OPEN AIRMAIL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON EACH CE REFUGEE WOULD BE MUCH MORE TIME CONSUMING THAN THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF TELEGRAPHING BIO DATA TO WASHINGTON.

4. IF REFUGEES COULD BE SENT TO HONG KONG AS SOON AS NUMBERS ARE AVAILABLE AND A QUICK PRE-SCREENING BY A CONSULAR OFFICER INDICATED A PRIMA FACIE CASE OF ELIGIBILITY, IT WOULD REPRESENT CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SINGAP 05568 101013Z

A MAJOR STEP FORWARD. IF WE COULD ACT QUICKLY TO MOVE ELIGIBLE REFUGEES TO HONG KONG, GOS WOULD BE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO BE COOPERATIVE ABOUT ALLOWING THEM TO STAY WHILE THIS PRE-SCREENING PROCESS TAKES PLACE. WE RECOGNIZE THAT CONGEN HONG KONG WOULD NOT WISH TO BE FACED WITH PROBLEM OF HANDLING LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHO MIGHT ULTIMATELY PROVE TO BE INELIGIBLE. HOWEVER, OUR TRACK RECORD HERE INDICATES THAT IN VIRTUALLY ALL CASES INITIAL DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY BASED

ON QUICK PRE-SCREENING HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY FINAL GRANTING
OF EPP NUMBER. HOLDRIDGE

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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